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Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15
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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2790
USIA WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 PRAGUE 1433

USIA FOR IEU

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: SOPN PROP PINT CZ
SUBJECT: MFA PRESS AIDE DISCUSSES CURRENT GOC POLICIES, PERSONALITIE
S

1. DURING A RECENT MEETING AT THE MFA A MEMBER OF THAT MINISTRY'S
PRESS DEPARTMENT, WHOSE RESPONSIBILITY INCLUDES AMERICAN AFFAIRS,
DISCUSSED SEVERAL CURRENT GOC POLICY ISSUES AND PERSONALITIES WITH TH
E
PAO.

2. PAO OPENED DISCUSSION, SAYING IF GOC HAS ANY HOPE OF
OBTAINING A FAVORABLE PRESS IN THE U.S., IT MUST APPRECIATE ITS
PRESENT POLICIES ON FOREIGN JOURNALISTS ARE NOT WORKING, AND
RESULT IN AN INCREASINGLY HOSTILE WESTERN PRESS TOWARD CZECHOSLOVAKIA
.
CITED EXAMPLE OF EIRC BOURNE, CHRISTIAN SCIENCE MONITOR CORRESPONDENT
,
ONE OF THE MOST SEASONED, BALANCED JORUNALISTS COVERING EASTERN
EUROPE. SAID GOC EFFORT TO GET BOURNE TO AGREE IN ADVANCE NOT TO
CONTACT "DISSIDENTS" ONLY BROUGHT DOWN IRE OF THIS MAJOR AMERICAN PAP
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AND MANY OTHERS ON CZECHOSLOVAKIA. ADDED EVEN WHEN A JOURNALIST DID
AGREE TO ABIDE BY CZECHOSLOVAK LAWS, AS IN RECENT CANADICN EXAMPLE,
WRITER HAD HIS NOTES SEIZED AT AIRPORT, PRODUCING MORE ADVERSE
PRESS COVERAGE FOR CZECHOSLOVAKIA.

3. SOURCE SAID WARSAW PACT MFA PRESS CHIEFS WILL MEET IN PRAGUE JUNE
28-29 AND FUTURE POLICIES TOWARD WESTERN JOURNALISTS WILL BE AN

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AGENDA ITEM. SAID HE WAS RECENTLY INVITED TO SOVIET EMBASSY TO DISCU
SS
PRESS POLICIES BECAUSE "EVEN THE RUSSIANS SAY WE HAVE BEEN TOO
HARD ON THE WESTERN JOURNALISTS."

4. AS FOR TREATMENT OF CANADIAN JOURNALIST, SOURCE BLAMED IT
ON THE MINISTRY OF INTERIOR. SAID MFA HAD INFORMED ITS USUAL
CONTACTS IN THAT MINISTRY ABOUT JOURNALIST'S ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE
DATES, BUT LATTER FAILED TO INFORM ITS AIRPORT UNIT, WHICH WENT INTO
ACTION ON ITS OWN. SAID A WESTERN EMBASSY CONTACT HAD URGED
MFA TO WRITE A LETTER TO MINISTRY OF INTERIR ABOUT COORDINATION
PROBLEM, BUT THIS WAS A NONSTARTER BECAUSE MFA PRESS CHIEF MILAN
KADNAR "WOULD NEVER SIGN SUCH A LETTER."

5. CONTINUED PRESIDENT HUSAK, FOREIGN, INTERIOR, AND DEFENSE
MINISTERS WILL MEET SOON TO DISCUSS HOW CONFLICTING DIVISION OF
POWERS IN FOREIGN AFFAIRS FIELD CAN BE RESOLVED. FROM PRESS SIDE,
HE SAID, GOC MAY BE MAILING TEN OR TWENTY PUBLICATIONS ABROAD
WITH NO ONE BEING SURE WHICH MINISTRIES ARE SENDING WHAT.
PAO ADDED IF GOC SENDS ATTRACTIVE TOURIST PUBLICATION ON ONE HAND
AND A COPY OF A SPEECH PERSONALLY ATTACKING PRESIDENT CARTER ON
THE OTHER, IT CANNOT EXPECT TO GAIN SYMPATHETIC HEARING FROM
AMERICAN AUDIENCES AND IS WASTING ITS EFFORT.

6. "YOU AMERICANS ARE MUCH MORE CLEVER ABOUT PROPAGANDA,"
HE CONTINUED, ADDING, "LAST WEEK I WAS TALKING WITH THE WOMAN
WHO TRANSLATES SPEKTRUM MAGAZINE FOR YOU. SHE TELLS ME HOW SHE
SPENDS TIME VISITING DOCTORS OR ENGINEERS TO GET THE RIGHT
PHRASE OR EXPRESSION. OUR PEOPLE LIKE THE MAGAZINE BECAUSE
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IT HAS ARTICLES ON A HIGH LEVEL ABOUT SCIENCE OR CULTURE.
YOU ALOWYS HAVE A POLITICAL MESSAGE, BUT IT IS WOVEN IN THE
ARTICLES. WE THINK THAT WE CAN CHANGE YOUR POLICIES BY ONE HARD
SOUNDING PRESS RELEASE, BUT WE COULD LEARN FROM YOU IN THIS
REGARD."

7. A NEW FOREIGN PRESS CENTER HAS BEEN OPENED BY THE GOC IN
BRATISLAVA, SOURCE SAID, AND VISITING FOREIGN JOURNALISTS WILL
BE ENCOURAGED TO VISIT THERE AS WELL AS PRAGUE. PAO JOKED THAT
KADNAR, WHO, LIKE THE FOREIGN MINISTER, IS A FORMER BRATISLAVA
JOURNALIST, WAS TAKING CARE OF HIS HOME TOWN. SOURCE SAID KADNAR
WOULD BE LEAVING PRESS JOB THIS AUTUMN TO BECOME CZECHOSLOVAK
AMBASSADOR TO AUSTRIA. VOLUNTEERED "KADNAR HAS HIS FRIENDS
AND HIS ENEMIES," BUT HE CAN "DO ANYTHING HE WANTS AS LONG AS
CHNOUPEK IS FOREIGN MINISTER" AND THAT FOREIGN MINISTER'S
POLITICAL SPONSOR IN TURN IS BILAK.

8. PROPOSED MINISTERIAL CHANGES IN PRESS DEPARTMENT MAY INCLUDE
KADNAR'S DEPUTY, JOSEF HADRAVEK, MOVING TO THE TOP JOB.

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HADRAVEK HAD BEEN IN THE SOVIET UNION. POSSIBLY FNU HROMADKA CURRENT
LY
IN CZECHOSLOVAK WASHINGTON EMBASSY AND FNU ONDERKA, NOW IN LATIN
AMERICA, MAY JOIN THE MFA PRESS DEPARTMENT AS WELL.

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9. SOURCE SAID OTHER HIGH LEVEL MFA CHANGES ARE AIMED AT MINISTER GETTING A GROUP OF CLOSE, TRUSTED ASSOCIATES IN POSITIONS AROUND HIM. SAID VICE MINISTER SPACIL UNTIL RECENTLY WAS IN LINE TO RETURN TO NEW YORK IN AMBASSADOR TO UN JOB, BUT HE APPEARS TO HAVE BEEN BUMPED FOR THAT POSTION BY A MEMBER OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE. VOLUNTEERED SPACIL IS CONSIDERED A LOYALIST " BUT THE MINISTER WANTS PEOPLE WHO WILL DRINK WITH HIM ON SUNDAY AFTERNOON" IN MAJOR FOREIGN MINISTRY JOBS.

10. DISCUSSING RECENT CHANGES IN SOVIET LEADERSHIP,CZECH MFA OFFICIAL VOLUNTEERED PERSONAL OPINION THAT PODGORNY WAS DROPPED FROM POLITBURO "BECAUSE HIS AFRICAN TRIP FAILED. HE MET WITH THE NATIONAL LIBERATION MOVEMENT CHIEFS, BUT HE DID NOT OFFER THEM ENOUGH MATERIAL AID." "AMERICA AND THE RUSSIANS ARE COMPETING FOR AFRICA, BUT YOU HAVE MORE MONEY TO GIVE THAN WE DO. LOOK WHAT WE AND THE SOVIETS DID IN EGYPT. WE GAVE THEM A GREAT DEAL AND WHAT DID WE GET FOR IT, NOTHING." PAO SAID U.S. WAS OFFERING MUCH MORE THAN MONEY IN AFRICA, FOR EXAMPLE EXPERIENCE OF AMERICAN AMBASSADOR YOUNG IN CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT IS TRANSFERABLE TO AFRICAN INDEPENDENCE MOVEMENTS BECAUSEQUEST FOR HUMAN DIGNITY INVOLVES MUCH MORE THAN MONEY.

11. PAO ASKED IF GOC HARDLINE PRESS POLICY TOWARD PRESIDENT CARTER WOULD CONTINUE. SOURCE SAID, " YES, BY CALLING ATTENTION
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TO THE VIOLATIONS OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN AMERICA, WE ARE ATTEMPTING
TO FORCE HIM TO PREACH TO AMERICANS AND NOT TO US."

12. PAO REPLIED NO ONE IS TRYING TO DICTATE INTERNAL POLICIES
TO ANOTHER COUNTRY, BUT HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUE HAS DEEP PRECEDENTS
IN AMERICAN HISTORY AND WHEN IT HAS INTERNATIONAL ASPECTS SUCH
AS IN CULTURAL, PRESS, OR TRAVEL QURSTIONS, WE CAN BE EXPECTED
TO RAISE THE ISSUE, IN DIFFERENT WAYS AND AT DIFFERENT TIMES.

13. SOURCE ASKED PAO ABOUT LATTER'S RECENT TRIP TO SOVIET UNION,
AND CONCLUDED "YOU SEE WHAT WE ARE UP AGAINST. AND IN THE NEXT YEARS
WE WILL HAVE TO MOVE OUR ECONOMY CLOSER TO THEIRS. WE WILL HAVE TO
REDUCE OUR IMPORTS FROM THE WEST TO HIGH PRIORITY ITEMS BECAUSE
WE DO NOT HAVE THE HARD CURRENCY. WE WILL HAVE TO ASK THE SOVIET
UNION FOR MORE ASSISTANCE, ESPECIALLY FOOD, BECAUSE THEY ARE MUCH
LARGER THAN WE ARE AND CAN HELP US." ADDED THAT, "WE ARE NOT SUPPOSE
D
TO HAVE INFLATION, BUT THERE ARE ALWAYS PRICE RISES. RIGHT NOW IF
YOU GO TO A TUZEX SHOP, YOU WILL SEE THE QUALITY OF WESTERN GOODS
HAS GONE DOWN AND THE PRICES HAVE GONE UP."

14. ON GOLD-CLAIMS ISSUE SOURCE SAID, " IN THE PRESS WE
BLAME YOU FOR NOT GIVING BACK OUR GOLD BUT YOU WILL NOTICE WE
DO NOT CALL YOUR AMBASSADOR IN ALL THE TIME TO ASK ABOUT WHAT IS
HAPPENING. AS LONG AS THE ISSUE IS UNRESOLVED, IT GIVES
GROUNDS TO CRITICIZE YOU."

15. COMMENT: IT IS NOT OFTEN THAT A MFA OFFICIAL WILL MOVE
BEYOND THE MOST CAREFULLY DELINEATED POLICY STATEMENTS TO EXPLORE
AN ISSUE, AND STILL RARER WHEN THE POLICY FORMATION PROCESS AND
ITS PERSONALITIES ARE DISCUSSED. PAO HAS HAD SEVERAL CONVERSATIONS
WITH SOURCE DURING PAST YEAR, AND LATTER, AND TO A LIMITED EXTENT HIS
CHIEF, HAVE TAKEN TO MOVING A BIT BEYOND THE OFFICIAL LINE IN
DISCUSSIONS. EMBASSY REQUESTS CONFIDENTIALITY OF INFORMATION
AND SOURCE BE PROTECTED.
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